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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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Applicant's amendment dated March 23, 2006 has been carefully considered but is non-persuasive.

With regard to Honda 6,092,987, Applicant has argued that the interpretation that because of the inherent frictional contact between the unnumbered o-rings and the structural case 28/42 and the joined one of the shroud rings B, the aft joint E is broadly considered to secure the structural case 28/42 to the structural hub D while the fore joint F is broadly considered to secure the structural case 28/42 to the joined one of the shroud rings B is not reasonable and not supported by the specification as would be read by one of ordinary skill in the art. Applicant has further argued that the assertion of frictional contact vitiates the claim element of "securing". These arguments are not persuasive, because the aft joint E secures the structural case 28/42 to the structural hub D while the fore joint F secures the structural case 28/42 to a joined one of the shroud rings B. As seen in figure 2 of Honda, the structural case 28/42 is sealed to both the structural hub D and the joined one of the shroud rings B, via unnumbered o-rings located in the structural case 28/42 and the joined one of the shroud rings B (see also figure 3). As set forth previously above, because of the inherent frictional contact between the unnumbered o-rings and the structural case 28/42 and the joined one of the shroud rings B, the aft joint E is broadly considered to secure the structural case 28/42 to the structural hub D while the fore joint F is broadly considered to secure the structural case 28/42 to the joined one of the shroud rings B.

Applicant has argued that in Honda, the element identified as C is not a plurality of bleed ports, but rather a single annular space rather than a plurality of ports. This argument is agreed

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with, however plural bleed ports opening into a bleed plenum are taught by Eleftheriou 6,755,025. Applicant's other arguments pertaining to Honda and Chlus have been carefully considered, but are moot in view of the teaching by Eleftheriou.

Claim Objections

Claim 23 is objected to because of the following informalities: Appropriate correction is required.

In claim 23, line 1, -- , -- should be inserted after "plenum".

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 1, 5-6, 9, 17, 19, and 23-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Honda 6,092,987 in view of Eleftheriou 6,755,025. Honda (please refer to the enlargement of figure 2 at the end of this action) discloses a gas turbine engine substantially as claimed, comprising a fan 22, a compressor 24 along a core flow path 18 and having a plurality of rows of unnumbered blades in figure 2, a plurality of rows of unnumbered vanes in figure 2, and a plurality of shroud rings A, B, a bleed one B of which defines a bleed port, and a structural hub D downstream of the shroud rings and secured relative to the shroud rings (Note that the structural hub D is inherently secured to some portion of the engine, because high pressure working fluid passes through the core flow path and structural case 28 rests on and moves about the structural hub, therefore the structural hub D must be secured to some portion of the engine to prevent downstream movement of the structural hub. Note also that the phrase “secured relative to the shroud rings” does not require that the structural hub D is secured to the shroud rings, but only that it is secured relative to the shroud rings.), a structural case 40/42 extending from an aft joint E securing the structural case to the structural hub D to a fore joint F securing the structural case to a joined one of the shroud rings B and having a plurality of valve ports 30, at least a portion of the structural case extending structurally between the fore and aft joints, and a valve element 62 shiftable between a first condition in which the valve element blocks communication through the valve ports, and a second condition in which the valve element does not block the communication. The valve element is shiftable via combined circumferential rotation and longitudinal translation. The valve element carries an outboard aft seal 72 and an inboard fore seal 74 for sealing with the structural case in the first condition. At least a portion

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of the structural case (the inner circumferential rail shown in figure 4b) extends as a continuous piece between the fore and aft joints. As seen in figure 2 of Honda, the structural case 28/42 is sealed to both the structural hub D and the joined one of the shroud rings B, via unnumbered o-rings located in the structural case 28/42 and the joined one of the shroud rings B (see also figure 3). Because of the inherent frictional contact between the unnumbered o-rings and the structural case 28/42 and the joined one of the shroud rings B, the aft joint E is broadly considered to secure the structural case 28/42 to the structural hub D while the fore joint F is broadly considered to secure the structural case 28/42 to the joined one of the shroud rings B. The plural valve ports 30 extend to an outboard plenum 32.

However, Honda does not disclose that the bleed shroud ring B defines plural bleed ports to a bleed plenum, with a bleed flowpath extending sequentially in a downstream direction through the bleed ports, into the bleed plenum, and through the valve ports 30 (claims 1, 9, and 23), does not disclose that the bleed plenum is an annular plenum (claims 17 and 19), does not disclose that the bleed shroud ring B shroud ring defines plural bleed ports to a bleed plenum, with a bleed flowpath extending in a downstream direction from the bleed ports into the bleed plenum (claim 24), and does not disclose that the bleed plenum is a common annular plenum (claim 25).

Eleftheriou 6,755,025 (figure 3) shows a bleed valve arrangement whereby a bleed shroud ring 13 defines plural bleed ports 14 to a bleed plenum 15, with a bleed flowpath extending sequentially in a downstream direction through the bleed ports, into the bleed plenum,

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and out through a valve 16/22, with the bleed plenum being an annular plenum, for the purpose of allowing for modulating bleed air when stall or surge occurs. The bleed shroud ring 13 defines plural bleed ports 14 to a bleed plenum 15, with a bleed flowpath extending in a downstream direction from the bleed ports into the bleed plenum, with the bleed plenum being a common annular plenum, for the purpose of allowing for modulating bleed air when stall or surge occurs.

It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to form the gas turbine engine of Honda such that the bleed shroud ring B defines plural bleed ports to a bleed plenum, with a bleed flowpath extending sequentially in a downstream direction through the bleed ports, into the bleed plenum, and through the valve ports 30, with the bleed plenum being an annular plenum, and such the bleed shroud ring B defines plural bleed ports to a bleed plenum, with a bleed flowpath extending in a downstream direction from the bleed ports into the bleed plenum, with the bleed plenum being a common annular plenum, as taught by Eleftheriou.

Claims 1, 5-6, 9, 17, 19, and 23-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chlus 6,802,691 in view of Eleftheriou 6,755,025 and Honda 6,092,987. Chlus (please refer to the enlargement of figure 2 at the end of this action) discloses a gas turbine engine comprising a fan 12, a compressor 14 along a core flow path 16 and having a plurality of rows of unnumbered blades in figure 1, a plurality of rows of unnumbered vanes in figure 1, and a plurality of shroud rings A, B, a bleed one B of which defines a bleed port C, and a structural

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hub 70 downstream of the shroud rings and secured relative to the shroud rings (Note that the structural hub 70 is inherently secured to some portion of the engine, because high pressure working fluid passes through the core flow path and the structural case shown generally at 20 rests on and moves about the structural hub, therefore the structural hub 70 must be secured to some portion of the engine to prevent downstream movement of the structural hub. Note also that the phrase “secured relative to the shroud rings” does not require that the structural hub 70 is secured to the shroud rings, but only that it is secured relative to the shroud rings.), a structural case shown generally at 20 extending from an aft joint E securing the structural case to the structural hub 70 via an unnumbered bolt to a fore joint F securing the structural case to a joined one of the shroud rings B (by virtue of the provision of the bolt and the abutting contact between the structural case 20 and the joined one of the shroud rings B) and having a valve port 20, at least a portion of the structural case extending structurally between the fore and aft joints, and a valve element 24 shiftable between a first condition in which the valve element blocks communication through the valve port, and a second condition in which the valve element does not block the communication. The valve element is shiftable via combined circumferential rotation and longitudinal translation (note that the term “is shiftable” is a recitation of intended use. A recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim. In a claim drawn to a process of making, the intended use must result in a manipulative difference as compared to the prior art. See *In re Casey*, 370 F.2d 576, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967) and *In re Otto*, 312 F.2d 937, 939, 136 USPQ 458, 459

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(CCPA 1963)). The valve element carries an outboard aft seal 44 and an inboard fore seal 48 for sealing with the structural case in the first condition. At least a portion of the structural case (the rear portion) extends as a continuous piece between the fore and aft joints. The valve port 20 extends to an outboard plenum near 66. An unnumbered bleed offtake duct extends outboard from the bleed port C.

However, Chlus does not disclose that the bleed shroud ring B defines plural bleed ports to a bleed plenum, with a bleed flowpath extending sequentially in a downstream direction through the bleed ports, into the bleed plenum, and through the valve port 20 (claims 1, 9, and 23), does not disclose that the bleed plenum is an annular plenum (claims 17 and 19), does not disclose that the bleed shroud ring B defines plural bleed ports to a bleed plenum, with a bleed flowpath extending in a downstream direction from the bleed ports into the bleed plenum (claim 24), and does not disclose that the bleed plenum is a common annular plenum (claim 25). Chlus does not disclose that the valve port 20 is plural valve ports (claims 1, 9, 23, and 24), and does not disclose that the bleed offtake duct is plural bleed offtake ducts (claim 26).

Eleftheriou 6,755,025 (figure 3) shows a bleed valve arrangement whereby a bleed shroud ring 13 defines plural bleed ports 14 to a bleed plenum 15, with a bleed flowpath extending sequentially in a downstream direction through the bleed ports, into the bleed plenum, and out through a valve 16/22, with the bleed plenum being an annular plenum, for the purpose of allowing for modulating bleed air when stall or surge occurs. The bleed shroud ring 13 defines plural bleed ports 14 to a bleed plenum 15, with a bleed flowpath extending in a

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downstream direction from the bleed ports into the bleed plenum, with the bleed plenum being a common annular plenum, for the purpose of allowing for modulating bleed air when stall or surge occurs. Plural bleed offtake ducts at 14 are provided for the purpose of modulating bleed air when stall or surge occurs.

It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to form the gas turbine engine of Chlus such that the bleed shroud ring B defines plural bleed ports to a bleed plenum, with a bleed flowpath extending sequentially in a downstream direction through the bleed ports, into the bleed plenum, and through the valve port 20, such that the bleed plenum is an annular plenum, and such that the bleed shroud ring B shroud ring defines plural bleed ports to a bleed plenum, with a bleed flowpath extending in a downstream direction from the bleed ports into the bleed plenum, with the bleed plenum being a common annular plenum, and such that the bleed offtake duct is plural bleed offtake ducts, as taught by Eleftheriou.

The modified gas turbine engine of Chlus shows all of the claimed subject matter except for the valve port 20 being plural valve ports.

Honda (figure 2) shows a gas turbine engine bleed valve system, whereby plural valve ports 30 are provided, for the purpose of allowing working fluid to be bypassed from the compressor flow path through multiple ports.

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It would have been further obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to form the modified gas turbine engine of Chlus such that the valve port 20 is plural valve ports, as taught by Honda.

Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Honda 6,092,987 and Eleftheriou 6,755,025 as applied to claim 9 above, and further in view of Malmberg 2005/0008486. The modified gas turbine engine of Honda shows all of claimed subject matter, including a structural hub D, but does not show that the structural hub carries plural fan exit guide vanes.

Malmberg shows a gas turbine engine having a compressor with a structural case 76 that carries fan exit guide vanes 77, for the purpose of guiding working fluid from the compressor.

It would have been further obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to form the modified gas turbine engine of Honda such that the structural hub carries plural fan exit guide vanes, as taught by Malmberg, for the purpose of guiding working fluid from the compressor.

Claim 11 is also rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chlus 6,802,691 and Eleftheriou 6,755,025 and Honda 6,092,987 as applied to claim 9 above, and further in view of Malmberg 2005/0008486. The modified gas turbine engine of Chlus shows all

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of the claimed subject matter except for the structural hub 70 carrying plural fan exit guide vanes.

Malmberg shows a gas turbine engine having a compressor with a structural case 76 that carries fan exit guide vanes 77, for the purpose of guiding working fluid from the compressor.

It would have been further obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to form the modified gas turbine engine of Chlus such that the structural hub carries plural fan exit guide vanes, as taught by Malmberg, for the purpose of guiding working fluid from the compressor.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 12-15 and 20-22 are allowed.

Claims 2-4, 7-8, 10, 16, and 18 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Christopher Verdier whose telephone number is (571) 272-4824. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 10:00-6:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Edward K. Look can be reached on (571) 272-4820. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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C.V
May 26, 2006



Christopher Verdier
Primary Examiner
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